

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 138, 142, 146, 150 and 152 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. to 137. (Canceled)

138. (Currently amended) An output control apparatus communicating with an information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the output control apparatus comprising:

print counting means for counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

trouble counting means for counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer;

determination means for determining whether or not the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches a predetermined value;

specifying means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

transmission control means for controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified by said specifying means to the information processing apparatus via the network, without receiving a request for outputting the specified trouble count value, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print

~~counting means reaches the predetermined value whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by the predetermined value; and~~

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value, without accepting a manual operation by the user,

wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means repeatedly perform transmission control and initialization, respectively, whenever said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

139. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to claim 138, wherein the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

140. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said transmission control means controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to said output control apparatus at the same time.

141. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said output control apparatus is a digital copier.

142. (Currently amended) A method of communicating by an output control apparatus with an information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the method of communicating comprising:

a print counting step of counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

a trouble counting step of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a specifying step of, in the case of determination that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted in said trouble counting step until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified in said specifying step to the information processing apparatus via the network, without receiving a request for outputting the specified trouble count value, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value ~~whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by the predetermined value;~~ and

an initialization step of, if in said determination step it is determined that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value, without accepting a manual operation by the user.

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

143. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 142, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

144. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

145. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 142, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

146. (Currently amended) A memory medium, storing computer-executable code for a method of communicating by an output control apparatus with an information processing apparatus via a network and controlling a printer, the method of communicating comprising:

a print counting step of counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

a trouble counting step of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a specifying step of, in the case of determination that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted in said trouble counting step until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified in said specifying step to the information processing apparatus via the network, without receiving a request for outputting the specified trouble count value, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value ~~whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by the predetermined value;~~ and

an initialization step of, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value, without accepting a manual operation by the user.

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value.

147. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to claim 146, wherein said initialization step initializes the print count value and the trouble count value if the print count value reaches the predetermined value.

148. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein said transmission control step controls transmission of the trouble data and information unique to the output control apparatus at the same time.

149. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein the output control apparatus is a digital copier.

150. (Currently amended) An output control system comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control apparatuses each communicating with said at least one information processing apparatus and controlling a printer,

wherein each of said plurality of output control apparatuses comprises:

print counting means for counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

trouble counting means for counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer;

determination means for determining whether or not the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches a predetermined value;

specifying means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print update means reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;

transmission control means for controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified by said specifying means to the information processing apparatus via the network, without receiving a request for outputting the specified trouble count value, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value ~~whereby the information processing apparatus recognizes the ratio of the number of print troubles counted until the print count value reaches the predetermined value at said~~ output control apparatus; and

initialization means for, if said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value, without accepting a manual operation by the user,

wherein each of said at least one information processing apparatus comprises:

reception means for receiving the trouble data from said

transmission means, and

display control means for making a comparison between the trouble data of said plurality of output control apparatuses received by said reception means, and for controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison, and

wherein said transmission control means and said initialization means are repeatedly performed whenever said determination means determines that the print count value counted by said print counting means reaches the predetermined value.

151. (Previously presented) A system according to Claim 150, wherein each of said at least one information processing apparatus further comprises selection means for selecting one of said plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in response to the comparison made by said display control means.

152. (Currently amended) An output control method, for use in a system comprising at least one information processing apparatus and a plurality of output control apparatuses communicating with said at least one information processing apparatus and controlling a printer, comprising the steps of:

performing by at least one of said plurality of output control apparatuses:

a print counting step of counting a print count value indicating a number of prints in response to delivery of a print sheet printed by the printer;

a trouble counting step of counting a trouble count value indicating a number of print troubles of the printer;

a determination step of determining whether or not the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches a predetermined value;

a specifying step, in which, if it is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, specifying the trouble count value counted by said trouble counting means until the print count value reaches the predetermined value;



a transmission control step of controlling transmission of trouble data including the trouble count value specified in said specifying step to a predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus via the network, without receiving a request for outputting the specified trouble count value, if is determined in said determination step that the print count value counted in said print counting step reaches the predetermined value ~~whereby the predetermined one of said at least one information processing apparatus~~ recognizes a ratio of the number of print troubles to the number of prints indicated by the predetermined value; and

an initialization step of, if said determination step determines that the print count value counted by said print counting step reaches the predetermined value, initializing the trouble count value, without accepting a manual operation by the user.

wherein said transmission control step and said initialization step are repeatedly performed whenever said determination step determines that the print count value counted by said print counting step reaches the predetermined value; and

at the information processing apparatus:

a reception step of receiving the trouble data transmitted in said transmission step; and

a display control step of making a comparison between the trouble data of the plurality of output control apparatuses received in said reception step, and controlling a display device to display a result of the comparison.

153. (Previously presented) A method according to Claim 152, further comprising the step of, at said information processing apparatus, selecting one of the plurality of output control apparatuses to be used in response to the comparison made in said display control step.

154. (Previously presented) An output control apparatus according to Claim 138, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

155. (Previously presented) An output control method according to Claim 142, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

156. (Previously presented) A memory medium according to Claim 146, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

157. (Previously presented) An output control system according to Claim 150, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.

158. (Previously presented) An output control method according to Claim 152, wherein said transmission control step controls the transmission of the trouble data whereby the information processing apparatus selects a suitable printer on the basis of the recognized ratio.